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LETTER
FROM THE
DUKE DE RICHLIEU
TO A
Certain Great DUKE in
ENGLAND.

— *Dolus an virtus quis in hoste requirit.*

VIRG.



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A
LETTER
FROM THE
DUKE DE RICHLIEU.

SIR,

HAVING at S—e experienced the effects of your penetration and sagacity, as well as your valour and conduct at F——y, I could not be so far wanting to myself, as not to embrace every opportunity of cultivating a correspondence with your h——.

Your h—— will, I hope, pardon me, if I put you in mind of the humanity and politeness for which the court of the grand monarch is so universally famed; at the same

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time assuring, that the lenity of their procedure is no less engaging than the brilliancy of the British assemblies and splendid greatness of their flaming masquerades.

Your h--- is sensible, of what all Germany perfectly well knows that the electoral dominions of your r---l f---r are at this time in the possession of the troops of the most christian k---: I have endeavoured, as much as is consistent with the safe accommodation of these, to create the least possible trouble to the inhabitants. I have eased the tradesman of the trouble of working in the dull and heavy manner practised among the inhabitants upon the Weser; and have every where introduced mechanics of every kind, to teach them a la mode de Paris. The German dishes, you know, were
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no way agreeable to the fashionable taste of the beau-monde ; every day since their connection with England, they delighted to introduce the clownish, obfolete, and rural kind of living, that was practised in the days of queen Befs, to the utter rejecting of the newest fashions at Versailles, which were so eagerly grasped at by the English themselves, that, to talk upon the new fashions, was the greatest part of education a fine gentleman could entertain his relations with, after returning from his travels. I, sir, have endeavoured to remove these clownish and rustic customs, by bringing in a number of the best cooks and valets, in order to form the minds of your f---'s subjects, by precept, and to excite by example, to follow les modes de Paris.

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But, sir, this is not all. I have sent people to dig, both in the silver and copper mines, in order to pave a way for the further aggrandizing of the electoral estates ; and so careful have I been in this particular, that, lest these should turn lazy, I have ordered the higher parts of the electoral specie into the king's dominions.

Now, sir, for so many favours, and that I still have in my power to confer many more, let me intreat you, which I do, par ma foi— with as much sincerity and truth as I was concerned for admiral Byng about some months ago.

The gentleman I have to recommend to you is the generous and tender - hearted sir John M---t, who is a near relation of the earl of P-----h, once a general

general of the British forces in Spain, and who was so greatly in the interest of the grand monarch Louis XIV, that he opposed carrying on the war against France, in the house of lords, and offered to fight John duke of M——h at a single combat, when insisting on a war in Flanders. And as it is the duty of every Frenchman to wish well to the M——t family, but particularly to sir J---, so I hope I may be excused for interesting myself in his favour, and for suggesting a few of the many arguments that may be used for preventing any hurt or punishment falling upon him.

All Europe knows that the court of France was apprised of the schemes of the English for making descents on their coasts. We had spies in every sea-port ;
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and these met, from time to time, at L——'s head in the Strand, where they communicated to each other their observations and intelligence, and transmitted them, by the first and surest occasion, to Paris.

Every thing was put in the best posture of defence, where a descent was expected; or if this was overlooked in some places, I am sure general M---t must easily suppose this to have been the case: and therefore if his imagination suggested what was natural to suppose, and he followed the natural dictates of his own heart, equally careful, not to spill the blood of his countrymen, and of the earl of P-----'s friends the French, it is hard he should suffer. Europe already stands amazed at the expedition: and shall they have

have something further to raise their surprize ? At this rate, England will be a country of wonders, and every sixth month will bring forth a prodigy !

When I landed at Minorca, on the 18th of April, 1756, Spain and Portugal, and the states of Italy, were astonished at the defenceless condition of the place, in which there were not more than two ships of the line and three frigates, and but a garrison of 2700 men. This raised surprize in one quarter, while the expedition itself, under my command, raised astonishment in another.

How could it be thought that a French army, guarded by no more than twelve men of war and five frigates, should attempt a place in the possession of a crown, whose navy is the most formida-

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ble in the world, and could easily have been dispatched to its relief? France continued the object of surprize, until the arrival of M. Byng, with a fleet scarce able to contend with that of France, under the count de Galissoniere, who, having by the doubtful fortune of war, defeated M. Byng, I was left to pursue incessantly the siege of fort St. Philip's, which, my good friend, the worthy general B----y, surrendered to me, before any breach was made in the body of the place. And here, allow me to testify my great friendship for M. B----y, who was pleased to make mention of the little civilities I shewed him, and shall be ready to shew to all such as follow his example, since every person must be sensible that it is not best to fight to the last extremity; and,

and, rather than encounter numbers with a handful of men, like Edward the Black Prince and the fool-hardy Charles XII. of Sweden, to terminate things amicably by the mediation of a third power, and so sign a convention for preventing the effusion of human blood!

I truly rejoiced at the convention, if on no other account than this, that succeeding ages will be convinced that you and I were acquainted ; and I always am glad of new acquaintances, especially with those of the English nation, who have done so much honour to my recommendation. Nor ever can good manners and politeness, as a principal servant of the grand monarch, suffer me to forget how much I am obliged to them for the great honours conferred on

M. B——y, in dignifying him with the title of a Lord ; nor can I forbear to declare my entire satisfaction with the people of Ireland, who have voted him a fine monument ; and to inscribe the words of the first article of the capitulation upon it. Be assured, that on every occasion, I shall exert myself to shew kindness and humanity, to a people so well deserving at my hand.

I know, sir, that the English ministry are divided among themselves ; and that these divisions contribute much to promote the interest of my august master, whose lenity and moderation always is proportionable to his success. He has propos'd to me to send, not only to lord B——y, but likewise to sieur Jean M——, the order of St. Louis ; and I flatter myself with

with being able to procure, by my own interest, with the august queen of Poland, mother to the dauphiness, the order of the Spread Eagle: for, I assure you, that she has, by her staying in Dresden, since the retreat of her husband, not a little contributed towards putting an end to the war. She is the daughter of the emperor Joseph, who succeeded his brother Leopold in the year 1705, and, in whose time, the troops and kingdom of Louis le Grand suffered such havock, by the sword, famine, and pestilence, as nothing but time, and the strenuous endeavours of the empress-queen and her Polish majesty, could atone for. By means of the courtiers about this princess, not only the Austrians, but likewise the French have an account of all the schemes
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and projects of the king of Prussia, who at this time appears to be ripe for destruction, and perhaps would be demolished, if it was not for the moderation and lenity of my august master.

Now, sir, to be free with you, I shall, in testimony of my gratitude for your marching to the Lower Weser, instead of taking the road to Magdeburgh, inform you, in the same manner as if you was the duke de Mirepoix, my most honoured friend, or even my own brother, that it is not the intention of Louis bien Aimè, tho' an enemy to blood, at this time to put an end to the war, upon many considerations. Your h— cannot be of opinion that the king can ever be a cordial friend to the empire of Germany, the body politic, which, next to England, has opposed the ad-

advancement of the house of Bourbon to universal monarchy. The scheme of his majesty and of M. de Rouille is, that Germany, from one end to the other, become a theatre of action, as it is at present, being ravaged by no less than seven armies: one of which is under the command of prince Charles of Lorrain and count Daun; a second under the command of the king of Prussia; a third under the prince of Bevern; a fourth under the prince of Soubise and the prince of Saxe-Hilburghausen; a fifth under the Swedish general, field-marshall Ungern Sternberg; a sixth under count Lehwald and the prince of Holstein; and a seventh, of only eighty thousand men, and no more, commanded by myself. Now, sir, can a more favourable opportunity happen for ruin-

ruining Germany by the hands of Germans, and for making them, like the armed men who sprung from the teeth of the dragon, draw their swords against each other, and fight to the utter extirpation of either party. Every Englishman will certainly rejoice at this ; for the English love the French, and imitate them in most things : they even build their ships, *a la mode de Toulon et Marseilles*. There is not a common soldier in the whole army under my command, who would not prefer being entertained with English beef rear'd up in the parks of Herenhausen, to the ragoux and lettice, on which they live in Old France : and I think no people can blame the French for living well in a foreign country, since there comes not a single sous out of the pocket of the grand

grand monarch; and, to shew you that I am no enemy to the king of Prussia, I hereby assure you, that he shall not be attacked by any of the French troops, except by those, who act in conjunction with the army of the empire, which I could heartily wish was destroyed.

Your h---- must be sensible that the king of Prussia is much weaker at this time than first when he opened the campaign. The army of observation, whose lives you husbanded so well, as only to engage a small part of them at the battle of Hastenbeck, and afterward to conclude a convention on their account, cannot in honour, or consistent with interest, act further in opposition to me; and therefore I think the Prussians should be assisted more by Eng-

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land than hitherto they have been; and that not only the last year's subsidy of 200,000 l. should be continued to them, but also the money that was given by parliament to the Hanoverian, Saxe-Gothan, and Hessian troops, which now are no more.

I am confident that the friends of M. Byng will have some regard for my recommendation, since I did every thing in my power for saving the life of that unfortunate commander: moved with pity and compassion for his case, I wrote to M. de Voltaire, then at Geneva, expressing my concern at his unhappy situation; and sorry am I that my letter, which was transmitted by M. de Voltaire to M. Byng, but fell into the hands of the British m---y, had not the desired effect; since M. Byng, by sparing his

his own men at a sea-engagement off Mahon, did no more than the British g-----s did this and the last year in North-America. It was what lord B-----y did at Mahon itself. It was but in conformity to your h---fs's conduct at Hastenbeck and S---e, and somewhat resembling the behaviour of sieur Jean M-----t lately at Aix. The fame of this gentleman, I assure you, has justled out of the coffee-houses of Paris, and even the king's court at Versailles, the convention signed between your h---fs and me. 'Tis no wonder that the expedition to the coast of France should terminate like that toward Bremen and Verden; for the convention was sign'd the 8th of September, the very day that the fleet and transports sailed from Spithead; both expe-

tions concluded in a manner very satisfactory to the king my master. And here I intreat you will receive my compliments of congratulation upon both, wishing that your temples may be crowned with olive, as you took the affair upon yourself, and may ten thousand place-men be ready to sound out your praise. Then let the obstinate and fool-hardy, look into the ocean while it is calm, sooner may they be able to raise tempests there, than disturb the universal joy that reigns in the breast of every Frenchman, to think of an event that crowns what the count d'Etrees, your friend and well-wisher, so well begun.

If I was writing to any other person but you, I should request of him to make my compliments to the d— of N——e, and to inform him, that whenever a peace
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is concluded, I shall use my utmost endeavours to send over into England an ambassador of M. de Mirrepoix's turn of mind, who may compliment his grace with pipes of Burgundy and Champagne, no worse than that used at his own table, in order to chear up the spirits of the lords and ladies, after having lost the bulk of their estates by gambling.

Lord A--- shall likewise be strongly recommended by me, to our next ambassador, in whose retinue a sufficient number of Swiss valets, French ushers, and French cooks, shall be sent over. I have a very great regard for Reynard, who, I hope, will continue a particular friend of the grand monarch, who will take care to send him three times the quantity of wine, and of much better quality, than

than what he has drunk since the time he received a present of burgundy from the late duke de Mirrepoix.

As for M. P--T, I am far from bearing him any ill-will ; I shall always be glad to hear of his schemes, and shall rejoice that they come to the same issue with the late expedition, in which sieur Jean was concerned, and heartily wish that he may spin out the time of the ensuing session of parliament in concerting means for making an enquiry into the things past, without agreeing upon any settled method of procedure ; tho' I should be sorry that the great assembly should so servilely imitate the French, as to provide against the time to come.

Upon the whole, I want words to express my regard for your
h----fs

h—fs, and my great gratitude for preventing the effusion of human blood. All the troops under my command are of the same opinion ; and though they keep possession of H—r, yet the same shall be evacuated, as soon as the provinces of Virginia, Maryland, and Nova Scotia, are ceded to the French, which, as it will be to the advantage of the H—s, as well as the interest of France, I pray and hope will speedily happen. Your h—fs and I are not enemies : your enemies, if there be any, are at London ; and mine are at the court of Versailles. However, both of us may rest entirely satisfied, since each has secured the esteem and affection of our respective kings.

Before I conclude, suffer me, in testimony of my great respect, to
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inform you, that I design to offer my compliments to the lord mayor, the court of aldermen, and common-council of the city of L---n, and to the whole of the livery; for the great encouragement given by the wealthy citizens of that metropolis to the imports from France, and to Frenchmen, animates me with a real desire of having an opportunity of shewing the same marks of affection and regard for them, which I shewed to lord B---y; and as I know the event would give entire satisfaction to my royal master, so I shall leave no stone unturned to bring it about; being further prompted by the consideration of having in that case full liberty of seeing and conversing with you. I am, &c.

RICHLIEU.

